A Looking-Glass FOR THE RECORDER, AND Justices of the Peace, And Grand Juries for the Town and County OF CAMBRIDGE.

MY hearty desires to God for you all are, That ye may understand so much of Religion, as is declared in the Laws and Statutes of this Land, and that the Oyer of the Law may be observed and allowed in all points, which is no more than the undoubted Right of every Free-born Subject of this Nation.

First, look into the Statute made the first year of Q. *Elizabeth*, chap. 1. *An Act to restore the Crown to the Ancient Jurisdiction, over the State Ecclesiastical and Spiritual, and to abolish all Forreign Power repugnant to the same.*

By this Statute all Commissioners are limitted, that have Authority to hear and determine the Offences of Error, Heresies, Schism, Abuses and Enormities, so that they shall not in any

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wise have Authority or Power to order, or determine, or judge any matter or cause to be Heresie, but only such as have formerly been adjudged so to be by the Canonical Scriptures, expresst in plain words; and that none shall be indicted or arraigned for any of the Offences made, ordained, or revived or adjudged by this Act, unless there be two sufficient Witnesses, or more, to testifie and declare the said Offences whereby he shall be indicted or arraigned. This Statute says further, That the Witnesses shall be brought face to face, before the Party so arraigned, if he require it.

Take notice, That all honest People require that; none ought to be fore-judged or condemned, neither ought ye to go upon them, nor set upon them, but by the Law of the Land; see the great Charter of *England*. I pray let us have Law for our Money, ye are paid for it before-hand: It is hard to find in the Histories of former Ages, [illegible] Money-Trade made of Religion, [illegible] in *England* within these two and forty Years, since the days of *Julian* the Apostate, he was the first I read of that used that Trade in so politick a manner, [illegible] formerly a *Christian*, and turned to *Heathenism*.

There are several Statutes made since these, that do give Power to the civil Magistrate to enquire into matters touching the Service of God, and establishing of true Religion in this Nation; therefore they had *need* to have a care of *warping* from the intentment of the Law, which hath made the Scriptures the *Rule* in such [illegible] have delivered them as a sufficient Rule both of *Faith* and *Manners*. (See the sixth Article of the Church of *England*) and have limited all so that they shall not expound one place of Scripture to make it repugnant to another. (See the 20th Article.)

Look into the Statute made the 5th and 6th years of King *Edward* the 6th, chap. 1. see the Preamble, which is a Key to open the intentment of the Law in this and all other Statutes; this Statute doth declare, "That there was a very godly Order in the "Church at that time, wherein all good People received comfort "by it, in their Christian Conversation: And this notwithstanding a great number of People in divers parts of this Realm "following their own Sensuality, and lived either without the "Knowledge or due fear of God, did wilfully and damnably

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"before Almighty God abstain and refuse to come to their Parish "Church. This is one of the *Fundamental Statutes* for our Protestant Church, and is worthy to be taken notice of by the *Bishops*, *Priests* and *Lawyers*.

I pray, mind the words of this Statute, that declares the Church of *England* was then in a very *godly Order, and all good People received Comfort thereby in their Christian Conversation*. It is very likely they were so at that day, an honest professing People that sought after God, and all they that did order their Conversation aright, did see the Salvation of God. These are sound words, and a Testimony also upon Record for those People. This matter is very weighty, I must follow my Syntersis that say, *The whole of any thing is more than any one part of it*; which brings me to that Party this Statute was made for, which "were a great Number of People in divers parts of "this Realm, that followed their own Sensuality, "and living either without the knowledge or due fear of God, "did wilfully and damnably before Almighty God abstain and "refuse to come to their Parish Church. This Statute leaves them to the Censure of the Church; that was very well done; they had then the Scriptures of Truth for their Law without doubt, which are the declared Fundamental Laws of Heaven, where all Judges are enjoyned to judge according to the Wisdom of God, which Wisdom judgeth very truly that wisdom that is beneath it, which is Earthly, Sensual and Devilish; and the civil Magistrate ought to correct the vicious Lives and Manners of such as live in their own Sensuality, either without the knowledge or due fear of God; and to do it according to Truth, not making the Punishment greater than the Offence, nor to make one suffer for anothers fault, that were both Uncharitable and Unchristian-like. And for forcing Conformity upon any, there can be no service to God in that, for Force makes Hypocrites, which is the same Spirit that appeared in many of those that were concerned in the War against King *Charles* the first, which were the conforming Party mostly: I very well remember that, and the Bishops Severity also, they were very Officious in their Offices, to make them Church-men with their Church-Policy, so called, which proved to be the same nature in effect with

See Dalton and *Student*, chap. 12.

that

that of the *Spaniards* with the *West-Indians*, and the *Papists* in Queen *Mary*'s dayes with the *Protestants*: Men must not play the Devil for Gods sake, to pollute a Church by forcing Conformity upon such a Generation of Vipers as those of these late times; and those that this aforesaid Statute declares of, ye ought to let them alone until they bring forth Works meet for Repentance, and not to add sin to sin. And do not heap up Works of Repentance for your selves, as your Predecessors did in hiding Hypocrisie under Church Formalities; I would not have you mistake me, I know there were many of those of the late times that meant honestly, and lived and dyed so. And for these People that this Statute speaks of, it is likely that amongst so great a number of People, there were some that had some formal Worship of their own in some private places, but this cannot be proved but by traditional Arguments; for the *Papists* never communicated their intelligence concerning their sufferings, to make them publick in this Nation.

This aforesaid Statute of the fifth and sixth of *Edward* the fourth, was repealed the first year of Queen *Mary*, but in the first year of Queen *Elizabeth*, chap. 2. it was revived again, and the Reasons why, as says the Statute, was, *because true Religion was much decayed by the said Repeal*: And in this Statute it is expreſt, "That all shall resort to their Parish Church upon Holy dayes, "except they could shew a lawful or reasonable excuse.

And in a Statute made the third year of King *James*, chap. 4. *An Act for the better discovering and repressing of Popish Recusants*, there is a Clause in that Statute which hath relation to this former Statute of the first of *Elizabeth*, chap. 2. which is, "That a "Justice or Justices of the Peace may call People before them, "and examine the cause why they do not go to the Church and "conform, (according to the aforesaid Statute made in that "case) and if they cannot shew a sufficient excuse to satisfie the "Justice, then the Justice may grant a Warrant to the Wardens of the Parish to take a Distress of their Goods for *Twelve Pence the Week* for not going to Church.

These are the Statutes that are made barely for *not going to Church*, which allow only a lawful or reasonable excuse. For the rest of the Statutes that have any Clause in them concerning going to

Church,

Church, look into them, and you will find that they were made for *Popish Recusants*, only in a Statute made the 23d. year of Queen *Elizabeth*, chap. 1. *An Act for retaining the Queens Subjects in their due Obedience:* This Statute was made for such Persons as pretend to have Power from the See of *Rome* to absolve People: "And for such Persons as are willing to be withdrawn from the "Church of *England* to the Church of *Rome*: And for such Per-"sons as have brought or shall bring in and put in execution "Bulls, Writings and Instruments, and other superstitious "things from the See of *Rome*, and in respect thereof did with-"draw great Numbers from their due Obedience to her Majesties "Laws established for the service of God; and did also with-"draw divers of the Queens Subjects from their natural Obedi-"ence to her Majesty, to obey the usurped Authority of *Rome*. Do not they that put this Statute in execution against *Protestant Dissenters* (that are clear of such doings) go a great way from the real intendment of the Law?

There may be several Orthodox Reasons given for dissenting from a Church that formerly professed Truth; the Scriptures are clear in matters of fact; I suppose that none will deny that. We read, that when the faithful City became a Harlot, the Prophets cryed out against her *New Moons*, her *Sabbaths*, and her *Appointed Feasts*, and Multitude of *Sacrifices*, and declared publickly, *That God hated them*; and yet their Sacrifices were formerly Gods own appointed Ordinances; *And that her Princes within her were roaring Lyons, her Judges evening Wolves, her Prophets Lire and Treacherous, and her Priests polluted the Sanctuary, and did Violence to the Law.* I hope none will presume to maintain, that the Prophets were not Dissenters in that day, and that they did conform to that which God hated: Thus stood the case with Gods People in that day; much more may be said of succeeding Ages to that purpose. But to return to my former Discourse concerning those Laws that are put in execution against *Protestant Dissenters*, with a serious consideration of the Transactions of our Magistrates, in putting the Statute of the 29th of *Elizabeth* in execution against them which Statute was made for the worst of *Papists*, and a Law too bad for them in all reason. This Statute being *An Act for the more speedy putting in Exe-*

cution the aforesaid Statute of the 23d of Elizabeth, and is it now at this day put in execution, it obstructs the laudable course of Justice that is enjoyned in the aforesaid Statute, made for the restoring the Crown to the Antient Jurisdiction, which is the only certain way for executing impartial Justice, that Statute having so near relation to the great Charter of England; for if our Magistrates expound one Statute to make it repugnant to another, and do the like by the Scriptures, they may soon make a cheat of Religion and the whole Body of the Law. Do the Laws of this Land judge any man before he is suffered to speak for himself? Is a Felon or Murderer convicted before his Accusers are brought face to face before him? And can Innocent People deliver their Bodies to the Sheriff before they have personal Notice given them to appear before you, to shew a Reason why they do not conform? Is this the way to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ that gave himself for the Redemption of Mankind, and commanded to love Enemies? And may such as call themselves Christians endeavour to make innocent People their own Executioners, to ruin themselves and a Gold, and if they refuse to do it, to seize their Lands and Goods to the Kings use? I cannot spare you in this, but must say you open such Proceedings will be a Moth both in the Kings Ears and Honour also. Go to your Common-Prayer, Catechism, see your Duty towards God and your Neighbour. The former pretence was, That we were suspected to be Papists, but now there is a way made to clear that Suspicion, there is a Test or Declaration contained in an Act of Parliament, made the 32th year of King Charles the second that now reigns, it being An Act for the more effectual Preservation of the King's Person and Government, by disabling Papists from sitting in either House of Parliament: This Act hath been put in execution by vertue of the King's Commition; I my self, with several others, subscribed to the Declaration contained in the said Act, before Judge Jones, a Record thereof is in the Exchequer, and a Copy of it in the Sheriffs hands, whereby we are discharged of the Penalties of those Statutes of the 35th and 28th of Elizabeth aforesaid, and yet this notwithstanding, there hath been this last two years, since the said Subscription, Writs taken out of the Exchequer against several of us, upon the same account, and found in the

Sheriffs

Sheriffs hands, and some Goods seized by the last years Writ; but they were restored again upon Complaint.

To be plain, there is no Law to compel People to Conform, if they can shew a lawful or reasonable excuse; Religion being an Obligation; man bound to God, and not to mens Opinions; the Scriptures are clear in this point, that say, *That the Law was not made for the Innocent, but for Wicked men*; And do not the Statutes say the same thing in effect, when it allows both a lawful and reasonable excuse; there is nothing can gain-say this, but *Make-bate Opinion*, falsly called *Religion*, which is the ground of Quarrels in matters of Religion; for when men do undertake either to inform or Correct others in matters of Religion, it ought to be done in Truth and Righteousness, from that inward Principle of the divine Life, whereby good men govern their Actions, and where that Principle rules, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is manifest in them, which is *Peace on Earth, Good Will towards men*; there is no other way for our Magistrates to perform any Duty towards God in order to establish true Religion in this Nation. A lifeless Religion hath no foundation to stand upon, that cannot be established, as is written, *The Kings Throne is established in Righteousness*, the King of Kings hath decreed it so, therefore let none deceive themselves, and sit down satisfied in bare Forms, but all to come to the living Saviour of Mankind, that is declared in the Scriptures of Truth, a man without Beauty or Comliness, being despised and rejected of men, *a man of Sorrow, and acquainted with Grief*, and in his Will and Testament hath left his followers, for a Legacy, a daily Cross, and they that do follow him will find it so, for man must (by the Power of Christ) cross that Nature in himself that leads him out from God into Sin, before he can be in a capacity to do any thing towards the establishment of true Religion in this Nation. There is nothing but Truth and Righteousness will stand in this Land of our Nativity, all things else Sand but as a tottering Wall in *England*, as late Experience hath shewn, whether they be Laws against Differences, flattering Addresses, Alliances, forced Oaths, contrived Covenants and Engagements for or against this or that Government. They that have true love to King and

his Government, must mannage his business in Truth and Righteousness, for if they do otherwise, their Policy will fail them; there is a Fire kindled in this Nation that burns secretly, which will break forth into Flames to consume that Stubble that man in his Worldly Wisdom is building upon, whether they be Professors or Prophane, that are gathering to themselves, and not gathering unto God, that is, out of that inward Principle of the divine Life, and is at this day Persecuting such as own and imbruce it, and think they can never do enough to uphold their lifeless Forms: It is likely the high-flown Churchmen that make a Trade of Religion will not like this discourse; but I cannot help that, it is the Widdows Mite cast into the Treasury; I am sure I have no Enmity in my Heart against any of them, but do desire well for them: Gods love is Universal to Mankind; *For God is Love, and they that dwell in God, dwell in Love*: I heartily wish that they would understand and practise this, it would soon put an end to Differences in Religion. It is a Duty incumbent with every true *Christian*, to shew those that they love, their Mistakes; it were Uncharitable to let People alone until their own Folly corrects them: I have seen a Book commonly called, *The King's Book*, with a *Greek* Title, Printed 1648. in which Book there is a Letter from King *Charles* the first, to his Son, this King that now Reigns, wherein he advises his Son, *To keep true Principles of Piety, Virtue and Honour, and he should never want a Kingdom*; And that *he should take heed that outward Circumstances and Formalities of Religion devoured not all*; And that *he should seriously consider the former, real, or objected Miscarriages, that which might occasion his Troubles, and avoid them*: And that *his Prerogative is best shewn and exercised in remitting rather than exacting the Rigor of the Law, there being nothing worse than legal* TYRANNY. Some of our Magistrates have exercised themselves not a little in this legal Tyranny, so called; they have been absolute Princes in their Offices, so Arbitrary have they been in their administring of Justice, that the Oyer of the Law hath been set at naught by them, as a thing of no value, although it is that both King and Subjects hold their Rights and Properties by; the violating thereof may make all things run on heaps again, as it hath done formerly, so that all Parties may be

 Sufferers

Sufferers for a time. But this word of Comfort I have for the Land of my Nativity, *The time will come, that the Lyon and the Lamb shall dwell together, and a little Child shall lead them*; therefore awake, awake ye out of your mistaken Judgments, and make haste to set up true Religion in your own Hearts and Consciences, that that Wisdom may flow from you that is better than Weapons of War, which is that good Syntertis, that eternal Power and Sapience, without which no men can have any assurance of heavenly Peace and Prosperity, nor enjoy any thing else long; for mans days are short, but this will continue with you forever, which is my desire for you, having nothing but love in my Heart for you all, and desire your Redemption from the Bondage of Corruption.

Cambridge, the 18th of the 3d Moneth, 1682. *Anne Docwra.*

THe Mystery of Profession great,
And Lifeless Forms I here repeat,
That all may see, that want of Light
Makes men like Bats and Birds of Night.

Profession was a lovely Tree,
And very green appeared to be,
With Blossoms fair as Eye can see;
And when the spring withers did flee,
It seem'd as it would bear some fruit.

Great Storms of Persecution blew,
That nipt the bud, and shook the tree,
And so, away the Blossoms flew;
What Fruit can then expected be,
From a Seared and blasted Tree?

The Husband man did his good Will;
No fault is found, nor want of Skill;
What's done in love can think no Ill.
And when that he expected Fruits,
It brought forth nothing but Disputes.

This Tree stands still upon the Ground,
Small hopes of Life, is being Unsound,
Who knows how Mercy may abound?
None can pluck up, but only he
That plants and pluths to Eternity.

Profession thus grown out of Date,
Through change of times and change of State,
In steps the Monster of Debate.
I'l show her in her Colours true,
And set her forth to publick view.

Make-bate Opinion, she appears,
With swarms of sealousies and fears,
Sets men together by the Ears,
And courts the times [illegible]
And makes that pass for Loyalty.

The Sun hath shin'd so long upon her,
Her breed grows great, and comes to Nature,
And strives to be as big as BONNER.
These Vipers in the Sun do play,
Makes all the year a Holy day.

But Storms will come to make them Creep
Into their Holes, in hopes of Sleep,
Instead of Rest, with Sorrow Weep.
This is the Portion that will be
Due to so great Hypocrisie.

Anne Dotwra.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THere are at this time Warrants out against many of the Protestant-Dissenters in this County of Cambridge, to take Distresses upon their Goods for Twenty Pound the Moneth, for no less than six Moneths, upon the Statute of the 23th of Elizabeth, made against those Papists that brought Bulls and Pardons from ROME, and withdrew many of the People from their natural Obedience to the Queen, to obey the usurped Authority of Rome; & those People that the Warrants are out against, are mostly poor People, and but few, if any at all (that I can hear of) that can or will provide Money for to pay such an illegal Debt. Disappointment will be the portion of all those that carry on such Designs as this: The Lord God Everlasting hasten the Confirmation of it, that men may see where they are, and what they are doing.

A. D.

THE END.